

## Country Report on Holocaust Education in Task Force Member Countries

### SWEDEN

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#### Summary

##### **Guidelines for Swedish Schools**

Over the past 15 years, the Swedish school system has been restructured from a central government organisation to one under the auspices of local government. This means that there are no detailed national guidelines; consequently, several activities have been either decentralised or abolished. This makes it more difficult to provide general information on school activities in particular subjects.

The Swedish educational system is *goal-oriented*. School activities are based on various national and local objectives that do not specify how they should be achieved with regard to form or content. These goals are traditionally divided into (1) goals that students should strive for, which generally refer to abstract strategies for global survival, and (2) goals that should be achieved, which generally refer to specific skills relating to particular subjects.

A crucial difference between this and a so-called *curriculum-oriented* educational system is that in the former there are no detailed curricula whatsoever for any subject. There are national curricula, however, describing the character and purpose of each subject. Individual schools, or sometimes individual sectors within the schools, plan their own syllabi, but they are subordinate to the national and local goals formulated for each subject. Aside from this, it is up to teachers to determine the focus and extent of study of any one subject.

To ensure consistent quality, national exams are held annually for students in compulsory school years five and nine. These exams are mandatory and identical for all students. The results indicate the proficiency of individual students, teachers, and schools in relation to national standards.

The goals defined for the subject of History in the national curriculum after the ninth year of schooling (age 16) require that students:

- Know the important events and are familiar with persons, ideas, and changes in the historical development of Sweden, the Nordic region, and Europe, and are able to make comparisons with other countries
- Are familiar with the development of world powers in different eras
- Understand how major social changes have influenced people's lives
- Are able to identify and reflect on a few historic events and developments that are significant to our own time
- Are aware, and can provide examples, of different interpretations of historic events and conditions

- Are able to reflect on how information and propaganda have been used in the past and today to influence people.<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of these goals, individual teachers establish syllabi that encompass the history of the world. In practise, naturally, the content of the teaching aids has a huge impact on the actual teaching content.

### **The Holocaust as a Study Unit in Swedish Schools**

It is hard to describe precisely how the Holocaust is dealt with in Swedish schools as there is no explicit documentation regarding it. The Swedish school system was thoroughly reformed in the mid-1900s. A commission was appointed immediately after World War II to study the future structure of schools, and the experience of Nazi Germany and the war influenced the way in which the subject of history was revised. Thus, the Holocaust could be said to have been incorporated into Swedish education during the postwar period,<sup>2</sup> though this does not explicitly account for the content or extent of Holocaust education.

At the Living History seminars in 1998 and 2001, titled “Fundamental Values and the Holocaust”, some 3,500 teacher participants were asked to summarise their syllabi, from which we drew the following conclusions:

- Holocaust education does not begin until year four or five.
- Most of the teaching of the Holocaust in schools is done in years eight or nine.
- The Holocaust was included in the history syllabi at the upper-secondary school level but, due to the shortage of time, only a few hours were devoted to it as part of the study of World War II.

### **Interest in the Holocaust Increased in the 1990s**

The 1990s saw a marked increase in the amount of time devoted to the study of the Holocaust in Swedish schools. This is described in greater detail in the answer to question 15 stated below.

### **Living History and Holocaust Education in Sweden**

In Sweden, as in other countries, various campaigns are launched in schools relating to violence, tobacco prevention, drugs, sexism, etc. Living History, however, was a new phenomenon in Swedish schools for it was a nationwide information campaign focused on a specific teaching element. Initiated by the Swedish prime minister, the project had a tremendous impact on schools.<sup>3</sup>

### **Swedish Students’ Awareness and Knowledge of the Holocaust**

In international comparisons of students’ general proficiency in school subjects, Sweden usually ranks near the top. The most recent survey of this kind reaffirmed this,<sup>4</sup> although our performance with regard to general knowledge in social studies was not quite satisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> National Agency for Education, *Lpo 94*

<sup>2</sup> Arvidson *Skolreformen*, passim

<sup>3</sup> KAN Kommunikationsanalys AB *Levande historia som kommunikationsprocess*, passim

<sup>4</sup> The National Agency for Education *NU-03* passim

The only study that explicitly looks at Swedish students' knowledge of the Holocaust was carried out by SIFO on behalf of the American Jewish Committee in December 1999.<sup>5</sup> The study shows that Swedish young people had a very high level of knowledge of, and appreciation for the importance of, the Holocaust as a subject in comparison to young people in other countries. As for purely factual knowledge, Swedish students received average or high marks; they ranked at the top in regard to the importance of memorials and remembrance. The report states: "On a cross-national basis, Swedes are at the top of the listing attaching importance to Holocaust remembrance."<sup>6</sup> Since no comparative studies exist, we cannot determine how our students' knowledge of the Holocaust is developing, but it is fair to say that Swedish young people in general have a satisfactory basic level of knowledge about the Holocaust.

### **Full report following the question guideline:**

#### **1. What official directives from government ministries and/or local authorities regarding the teaching of the Holocaust exist in your country? Please attach these directives to your answer.**

As mentioned in the general summary, Sweden has a goal-oriented education system, rather than a curriculum-oriented system. Thus, there are no instructions for teaching individual sub-units within the framework of a general subject, though study of the Holocaust is explicitly listed as the only learning element in all subjects, as shown in the following extract from the history syllabus:

History has been characterised by actions and events, conflicts and hostilities, that have influenced development in various ways. The subject encompasses a multi-faceted picture of events. This picture includes social, economic, technological and cultural progress, along with conflicts, tensions and redistribution of power within and between nations. This applies not least to the darker, destructive aspects of history, in the form of ethnic, religious and political persecution. The history of our time, including progress and peace efforts, but also genocide such as the Holocaust, revolutions and war, should be part of the knowledge of all students.<sup>7</sup>

#### **2. If the Holocaust is not a mandatory subject, what percentage of schools chooses to teach about the Holocaust?**

It is not mandatory for schools to report the teaching they have undertaken with regard to individual subjects. Therefore, it is extremely hard to determine with any accuracy how many schools teach their students about the Holocaust.

In Sweden, approximately 90 %<sup>8</sup> of all schools are public. There is no indication that any of these refrain entirely from teaching about the Holocaust. Nor are there any signs that the situation is

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<sup>5</sup> The American Jewish Committee *Knowledge and remembrance of the Holocaust in Sweden*

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p 4

<sup>7</sup> The National Agency for Education *Kursplan för historia* (History Curriculum)

<sup>8</sup> The National Agency for Education, *Jämförelsetal*

any different in private schools; on the contrary, some private schools require their students to visit Holocaust memorials.<sup>9</sup>

The Swedish National Agency for Education is the national central administrative authority that monitors Swedish schools. To date, only two schools have been cautioned for allowing students to graduate without having studied the Holocaust, which fails to meet the agency's goals for the subject of history.<sup>10</sup> We cannot guarantee that this has not happened in other schools, but the agency does monitor it. Thus, we have concluded that teaching about the Holocaust is a regular and mandatory part of the syllabi in Swedish schools.

### 3. How is the Holocaust defined?

The word *Holocaust* does not appear in the Swedish language, which makes it difficult to answer this question. The term used in Sweden is *Förintelsen*, the same as the German *Vernichtung*, which was also used by the Third Reich. In Sweden, the term *Förintelsen* referred to German aggression against the Jewish people and the Jewish culture and was used to describe the situation in Nazi Germany as it was occurring. Thus, the concept is firmly rooted both in the historical discourse and among people in general. In Sweden's most respected encyclopaedia, *Nationalencyklopedin*, *Förintelsen* is defined as "the Nazi genocide of Jews and certain other ethnic groups during the Second World War in 1939-45 or the Hitler era, 1933-1945, when the Holocaust was 'prepared' through the euthanasia programme."<sup>11</sup>

The question of how to define the Holocaust is debated in Sweden as it is in other countries. The government report that preceded the founding of the Living History Forum took a neutral stand with regard to the definition of the Holocaust, maintaining that it was not crucial to the focus of their activities:

We agree, however, that definitions are important, and that the discussion should be pursued—for instance, by the Living History Forum—as new, relevant material emerges.

In view of the purpose we have defined for the Living History Forum in relation to the Holocaust and the crimes of Nazi Germany against humanity, current crimes against human rights and the lessons for the future that can be learned from history and contemporary society, differences in the interpretation of the issues described in the summaries need not cause any major difficulties. On the contrary, the Forum should be able to contribute to deeper discussions, on the road to increased consensus regarding the definitions used in international and domestic debate.<sup>12</sup>

However, Sweden has adopted the so-called "Stockholm Declaration," in which the Holocaust is defined slightly differently; this is now the definition embraced by the Living History Forum.

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<sup>9</sup> Two schools in Gothenburg, Bö-skolan and Ingrid Segerstedt-Wibergsgymnasium

<sup>10</sup> The National Agency for Education, supervisory decision 2003-06-27 reg. no 54-2002:3543 and 54-2002:2393

<sup>11</sup> Nationalencyklopedin [www.natinalencyklopedin.se](http://www.natinalencyklopedin.se)

<sup>12</sup> SOU 2001:5 Living History Forum, pp 104-105

**4. Is the Holocaust taught as a subject in its own right, or as part of a broader topic? Explain the reasoning behind this decision.**

The Holocaust is incorporated into the curriculum but is not a subject in its own right. This is in compliance with the Swedish education system, in which subjects are divided into broad classical disciplines such as history, mathematics, Swedish, etc. Each subject incorporates various topics, which teachers may then organise according to their own judgement as long as they fulfil the national and local goals for each subject.

**5. At what age(s) do young people learn about the Holocaust in schools? Do students encounter the Holocaust in schools more than once? Please give details.**

As described in the general summary, the Swedish school system does not have detailed central guidelines such as the curriculum model applied by many other educational systems. Therefore, there is no simple answer to when and how often students are taught about the Holocaust. Judging by the content outlined in the textbooks, however, it would appear that Holocaust teaching normally takes place in year nine, when students are 16. Moreover, the subject is taught again in upper-secondary school, but the extent and timing depends on the student.

During the 1990s, history was not a core subject at the upper-secondary school level, which meant that it was possible to graduate from upper-secondary school without studying history or the Holocaust. Now, however, history is once again a core subject, and international history will become a compulsory subject of study for all students beginning in 2007. This means that students will study the Holocaust again at the upper-secondary school level.

Students also often encounter the subject in year five or six, when they are 11 or 12, but this is up to the individual teacher's interest and focus. There is currently no way of determining to what extent students at this age encounter the subject other than what was described in the general summary.

**6. How many hours are allocated to teaching and learning about the Holocaust in schools?**

Since teachers have academic liberty, it is impossible to answer this question. There is nothing to prevent a teacher from devoting a mere 60 minutes, or an entire term, to Holocaust studies. On the basis of the number of student visits to memorials, visits to the schools by firsthand witnesses, the content of textbooks, and the use of film and video material, we estimate that teachers rarely devote less than three hours and commonly devote more than 30 hours to the study of the Holocaust.

**7. In what areas of study (history, literature, sociology, theology) is the Holocaust taught? In each case, briefly outline the rationale for teaching the Holocaust in this particular subject area.**

Again, it is up to the individual teacher to determine how he or she should fulfil the goals of the national curriculum for the subject, so there is nothing to prevent them from incorporating the Holocaust into any subject. Nevertheless, the Holocaust is primarily taught within the subject of

history, though it is not unusual for it to be included within the subjects of literature, religious studies, or social studies. The Holocaust may also be treated as the object of a “topical project,” in which different disciplines serve to highlight various aspects, such as individual responsibility, existential questions, and the mechanisms leading to genocide. In a topical project, the students’ work is graded within all relevant disciplines.

**8. a) What historical, pedagogical, and didactic training is provided to teachers of the Holocaust at either the university level or the professional development level in your country?**

**b) How many teacher-training sessions are held each year, and how many teachers are involved?**

**c) What funding is available for training in the teaching of the Holocaust in your country?**

### **At the University Level**

Since the Holocaust is not a compulsory part of the Swedish school curriculum, there are no mandatory university courses with a historic and/or didactic component pertaining to the Holocaust. Nor does teacher training require any courses on Holocaust education. The Holocaust is included, however, in all university history courses in the first term, albeit briefly as the purpose is merely to provide an introduction to the broad outline and general context of the subject.

There are also university courses that include the study of the Holocaust as a part of local initiatives:

- At Uppsala University, the Programme for Holocaust and Other Genocide Studies offers both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In the past few years, the programme has carried out an extensive training strategy, offering short courses and seminars for teachers through funding from the National Agency for Education. Although the funding has come to an end, the programme is still trying to fulfil the need for Holocaust education despite their restricted resources. A small number of courses are now offered in cooperation with the Living History Forum, a government agency, and the independent organisation Svenska Kommittén mot Antisemitism (Swedish Committee Against Anti-Semitism, or SKMA). The quality of the courses is well-regarded as they utilise both national and international expertise.
- The prospectuses for study programmes or individual courses at Swedish universities and university colleges vary greatly in form and content. A study conducted in November 2004 of prospectuses for the academic year 2004–2005 revealed the following categories (see appendix for a list of courses):

Courses specifically and solely about the Holocaust

Courses with a distinct section on the Holocaust, within a broader academic subject

Courses incorporating Holocaust-related subject didactics and theory in teacher training

Courses with a distinct didactic or subject-related section of a cross-disciplinary nature

The courses listed in the appendix are not necessarily identical to the courses on offer throughout the three-year period in which 2004–2005 was included. However, in view of the cut-backs that universities have been forced to make over the past few years, the differences should only be marginal. Before the cut-backs, a broader range of courses was available as part of the so-called “Year of Fundamental Values”, initiated by the National Agency for Education in 1999 and the newly established Living History Forum in 1998. Courses such as “Fundamental Values and the Holocaust” were held at several universities, and earmarked funding was available at the time to support initiatives in the field of fundamental values, especially at the universities of Gothenburg and Umeå. The course heading mentioned above was identical to the name of the didactic and theoretic seminar arranged by the Living History Forum primarily for practising teachers from since 1998. This indicates an obvious link. Between 2001 and 2004, we note a reduction in the number of courses dealing with the Holocaust.

The courses on offer may seem scant, but most are available to students from other parts of the country and thus cover a large geographic area. The individual courses are predominantly linked to the faculties of history of ideas and teacher training.

It is not possible to determine exactly how many students in Sweden encounter the history of the Holocaust through academic studies. A modest estimate would be a couple of thousand each year. This has been achieved within the existing financial budget allocation to universities agreed upon by the government and parliament, without additional earmarked funding.

### **Other Courses on Offer**

Since its launch in 1998, the Living History Forum has provided seminars on Holocaust education. These seminars include both subject theory and subject didactics. To date, the seminars have been attended by thousands of interested people. There are also seminars for the general public and ones exclusively for those who have attended the Forum’s one-year training or guide-training programmes. From 2005 on, the Forum will organise four open and two exclusive seminars each year.

The non-government organisation SKMA has been organising basic and follow-up courses together with the Swedish Teachers’ Union for many years. These courses are offered to everyone working professionally with issues of racism, antisemitism, and genocide. The courses offered by the Living History Forum and the SKMA all include Holocaust subject theory and practical didactics.

The courses at the Living History Forum and the SKMA are arranged in close cooperation with scholarly research at the universities of Uppsala and Gothenburg.

### **9. Has your country instituted a national Holocaust Memorial Day? If so, in which ways is this day marked and commemorated? What difficulties have you encountered in establishing this day of remembrance in the national consciousness?**

At the initiative of Prime Minister Göran Persson, 27 January was established as a national Holocaust remembrance day. The Living History Forum is responsible for coordinating activities

and commemoration ceremonies on that day. Moreover, the Forum actively encourages the public's awareness of the remembrance day and assists local initiatives. The main initiatives for remembrance day activities come from individual organisations, both private and public. The greatest challenge lies in increasing people's awareness of the remembrance day and, to some extent, in defining its purpose.

**10. Has your country established a national Holocaust memorial and/or museum? What numbers of students visit this memorial/museum each year?**

The Living History Forum in Stockholm is Sweden's national institution for Holocaust commemoration. Since June 2003, the Forum has assumed the tasks that were previously handled by the Living History Information Project, launched to promote knowledge about, and commemoration of, the Holocaust. The Living History Forum was established as an independent government agency under the Ministry of Culture to "promote efforts for democracy, tolerance and human rights, with the Holocaust as its starting point."<sup>13</sup>

The Living History Forum designs its cultural, educational, and information programmes for a broad public, with a special focus on children and young people. As the forum began its activities fairly recently, any visitor statistics would be misleading, but annual visitor numbers are estimated as follows:

- More than 20,000 visitors to exhibitions, of whom 8,000 participate in workshops
- More than 115 participants in the national training programme, a one-day seminar
- More than 400 participants in the international training programme, a three-day seminar
- More than 400 participants in the course programme, individual lectures, and other symposia for undefined or more general target groups

These figures pertain to visitors who have participated in activities relating to the Holocaust. The forum also organises activities in associated fields, for which there are separate statistics.

**11. Please estimate the percentage of students in your country who visit authentic sites, and list three primary sources of funding available in your country for visits to authentic sites.**

There are no statistics available on all memorials visited by Swedish students, and most organisations that keep records do not differentiate between adults and children, or between children who visit privately or as participants in a school activity. This, together with the fact that students who visit memorials usually visit more than one, means that any estimate of the number of students who visit memorials would be inaccurate at best.

Based on visitor statistics from the city museum in Auschwitz, which is undeniably the institution most frequented by Swedish students, we estimate that 7–10% of all students visit that particular site. Moreover, we know that Swedish students visit numerous other sites in Poland, Germany, the Czech Republic, and other countries without visiting Auschwitz. On the basis of these vague data, we can safely assume that at least 10% of Swedish students visit memorials. It is likely that

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<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Culture, *appendix to government decision 2003-04-30*



the frequency is in the region of 15–20%, but this needs to be substantiated with statistics from a significant number of institutions and an adequate analysis of possible sources of error.

There is no information available on how trips are financed, nor is there any general public funding for this activity. A random review of study trips<sup>14</sup> reveals that schools usually finance the trips themselves with assistance from their local authority. The second most common option is for the school to fund the trip with contributions from students and parents. The third option is extensive fundraising, where the school and local authority contribute a share and students raise additional funds through volunteer work or grants from trusts or businesses.

**12. What are the three major textbooks used in teaching the Holocaust in your country? How many pages do your school textbooks allocate to the Holocaust, and on which aspects do they focus?**

**The Use of Textbooks in Swedish Schools**

In the Swedish compulsory school system and upper-secondary school, the textbook is not an obligatory element in teaching and learning. For the past 20 years, textbooks have ranked on the same level as other teaching aids, including school library resources, newspaper articles, and museums. The choice of teaching aids varies according to the educational objective. Since the Swedish education system emphasises the value of an investigative work method in its curricula (Lpo 94/Lpf 94), the result of the students' process of inquiry often forms the basis for a teaching aid linked to a specific learning segment.

In general, however, the higher levels of compulsory school and upper-secondary school have access to textbooks when required.

Along with the decentralisation of the Swedish educational system, all government authorisation of teaching aids ceased in 1991. Before then, textbooks were required to fulfil certain basic criteria for factual correctness and objectivity, in addition to covering the key elements outlined in the curricula. Today, the central curricula do not stipulate any key elements, and it is up to the schools themselves to decide which teaching aids are used. In some schools the students create their own textbooks, with no detrimental effect on educational quality.

In other words, there is no central monitoring of teaching aids, and today only Bibliotekstjänst in Lund continually reviews new textbooks.

**The Multi-levelled Swedish Textbook**

Holocaust education relies on history textbooks as a starting point. Today's Swedish history textbooks work on several levels, like textbooks in any other Swedish subject.

These levels become apparent when, for instance, students take their books home to do their homework. Hopefully, this brings the books into contact with adults who will be eager to read them, since they contain factual knowledge presented in a way that is appropriate to the age group. In the following analysis of how Swedish textbooks describe the Holocaust, we should

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<sup>14</sup> Based on a selection of ten local authorities that frequently carry out study tours, and the tours listed in the National Agency for Education's activity analyses of Swedish schools.

bear in mind that the segment on the Holocaust is only one in a larger teaching and learning context, which can be analysed on any of the levels mentioned above.

Moreover, the description and analysis of the three most widely used history textbooks in compulsory school and upper-secondary school focuses mainly on the information level and the presentation of facts about the Holocaust. None of the most commonly used textbooks aim for any specific pedagogical level. It should be underlined that the Holocaust as a historic phenomenon is only presented in the history textbooks, and is not dealt with in social studies.

It is not known how many textbooks are sold in Sweden, since this is a business secret. Nor do we know exactly which books dominate the market. However, by studying the distribution figures for history textbooks we obtain a fairly realistic picture. In order to get quantity discounts, most of the books are distributed to schools via a company called Läromedia AB. This distributor has informally, and without obligation to certify them officially, supplied the following lists of the top three:

### **Compulsory School**

1. SOL 300—Levande Historia, by Lars Hildingsson and Kaj Hildingsson (Natur&Kultur), 2003
2. SO Direkt Historia, by Bengt Almgren, Berndt Tallerud, Hans Thorbjörnsson and Hans Tillman (Bonnier Utbildning), 2004
3. Historia Punkt SO, by Erik Nilsson, Hans Olofson and Rolf Uppström (Gleerups förlag), 2004<sup>15</sup>

### **Upper-secondary School, History A**

1. Alla tiders historia, by Börje Bergström, Arne Löwgren and Hans Almgren (Gleerups förlag), 2002
2. Perspektiv på historien, by Hans Nyström och Örjan Nyström (Gleerups förlag), 2004
3. EPOS, by Robert Sandberg, Per-Arne Karlsson, Karl Molin and Ann-Sofie Ohlander. (Almqvist&Wiksell), 2002<sup>16</sup>

### **Analysis of Content**

As there is no national standard for Holocaust education, the number of pages of text devoted to the Holocaust has no bearing on how much time is devoted to the subject, nor is it an indication of its importance. Thus, no one knows to what extent the number of pages in the textbook corresponds to the time spent on Holocaust education.

### **SOL 300 – Levande Historia åk 9 (2 pages out of 152)**

The Holocaust is presented in the context of World War II. The text looks back at the events and is mainly descriptive. There is a distinctly intentionalist perspective, and Hitler's ambitions are the decisive factor. Antisemitism is offered as an explanation, and the section is separate from an earlier section describing Hitler's accession to power, dictatorship, and eugenics. The victims are listed as several groups alongside the main Jewish group. No clear perpetrator or functionalist perspectives are presented in the few pages. Neither perpetrators, victims, nor resisters get to tell

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<sup>15</sup> Titles in English are: 1. SOL 300 – Living History; 2. SO Direct History; History Dot SO.

<sup>16</sup> Titles in English are: 1. History of All Times; 2. Perspectives on History; 3. EPOS.

their stories. The only personal account is that of a farmer, a passive bystander, plowing his fields outside Treblinka.

### **SO Direkt Historia 3 (3 pages out of 117)**

The text is comprehensive and includes references to antisemitism in the Middle Ages and 19th century Russia, and to the aftermath of World War I in Germany. Vague references are made to ethnic and economic decline in Germany, which in turn are linked to the racial laws of the Third Reich. The objective description is followed up with explanations that balance between the functionalist and the intentionalist perspectives. The perpetrator Himmler is made more distinct through his speech in Posen, and a whole page is devoted to the narrative of survivor Sioma Zubricky. The section is linked to World War II, and indicates that Jews were not the only victim group.

### **Historia Punkt SO 3 (4 pages out of 117)**

The section starts with an excerpt from a survivor's testimony. This is followed by background information on the Holocaust, as in SO Direkt. The racial laws are specified and the "Einsatz-Gruppe" and concentration camps are described. The victims comprise more than the Jewish majority. The perpetrators are indistinct, collaborators are mentioned vaguely, and the main focus is on the heroes. The text is primarily descriptive, and the explanation is almost entirely functionalist since the parties concerned are only mentioned briefly. Hitler is not mentioned in connection with the "Final Solution."

### **Alla Tidars Historia (2 pages out of 360)**

In connection with an account of World War II, the Holocaust is described within the context of Nazi racial doctrine. This is followed by an analysis of the accelerating development of events leading up to systematic extermination. Consequently, the perspective is primarily functionalistic, and the people involved remain secondary. This is compensated for slightly by brief testimony from a perpetrator of what a death camp was like. This helps to make the victims more visible, but the victim groups are not distinctly defined—it is merely hinted that some members of the Resistance were murdered. Raoul Wallenberg and Folke Bernadotte are chosen to represent bystanders who took action.

### **Perspektiv på historien (7 pages out of 460)**

The presentation is comprehensive and detailed, with a separate chapter on the Holocaust that concludes the section on World War II. Descriptions are coupled with explanations, and a whole segment is devoted to analyses that balance between the functionalist and the intentionalist perspectives. Antisemitism, racial laws, and extermination are carefully defined, though the text does not provide many concrete details. Hitler's guilt is clearly indicated, but his role in the decision-making process is only implied, as is Himmler's. Neither victims', perpetrators', nor bystanders' testimonies are included. A photograph makes clear that Jews were not the only victim group.

### **EPOS ( 1.5 pages out of 182)**

A short passage is included in the description of World War II, directly following one on Russian POWs and the war on Soviet territory. No background information is provided on antisemitism or the economic depression. Hitler and his main enemies, communism and Judaism, are the focus of the short, intentionalist explanation. No victim testimonies are included, but a

fact box states that the victims were either deceived or refused to believe in the Holocaust. No other victim groups are mentioned. The role of the bystanders is not discussed in any way.

### **Conclusions from Our Analysis of Textbooks**

All passages regarding the Holocaust appear in conjunction with sections on World War II. Thus, the reader must frequently try to recall the emergence of the Third Reich covered earlier in the textbook.

All of the textbook passages are matter-of-fact, with few errors. The material does not deal with all perspectives, however. The various parties and how they relate to one another is not clarified.

The authors have not consciously focused on one type of explanation, and most balance between functionalist and intentionalist explanations. None of the texts, however, apply a post-functionalist approach. Since the space devoted to the subject is limited, there is generally little room for detailing the fates of individual persons. This is a necessary commercial omission, since the books are not marketed solely for their sections on the Holocaust.

Photographs appear to have been selected mostly for their quality rather than to illustrate specific aspects of the text.

In relation to the *Guidelines on Teaching about the Holocaust* of the ITF Education Working Group, we can draw the following conclusions:

The textbooks deal with the period of 1933–39 in chapters before the Holocaust. Some books refer explicitly to previous chapters. However, the early concentration camps and the reactions from the rest of the world are not dealt with in the text specifically about the Holocaust.

In the text dealing with the period of 1939–1945, the main emphasis is on persecution and death in the concentration camps in connection with World War II. Little or no mention is made of euthanasia policies, the creation of ghettos, the “Einsatz-Gruppe”, collaboration, resistance, rescue missions, world response, death marches, or liberation.

The period after liberation is not mentioned at all.

In light of the compulsory school curriculum specifically mentioning the Holocaust as a topic of study, the textbooks are fairly scant, though the publishers do provide further reading and exercise books as a complement to the material. In these we find, for instance, excerpts from Christopher Browning’s book *Ordinary Men*. However, due to restricted funding and the limited time that Swedish compulsory schools and upper-secondary schools have, it is doubtful they can avail themselves of this material.

### **13. What strategies of differentiation are typically used to make the study of the Holocaust accessible to students of different ages and with different learning needs?**

For younger students there are several eyewitness accounts that were written specifically for children aged 6 to 12 and a few easy-to-read historical summaries; a total of 14 titles in this field

published in Swedish are currently available in Swedish libraries.<sup>17</sup> Other material is available as well, including films. There is no ongoing methodological development aimed specifically at younger students or students with learning difficulties. It is obvious, however, that teachers of younger children have developed methods for dealing with the Holocaust and that teachers of students with learning difficulties have to do the same.

#### **14. How far and in what ways is your country's own national history integrated into the teaching of the Holocaust?**

Since Sweden was neutral throughout World War II, the role of a neutral country is dealt with explicitly, with a heavy emphasis on the general war history. The way in which Sweden dealt with refugees during the Nazi era is discussed in most of the major textbooks.<sup>18</sup> A few of the complementary teaching aids, especially film material, also mention Swedish Nazism and Swedish eugenics, including the sterilisation laws.

#### **15. What are the three major obstacles to teaching and learning about the Holocaust in your country?**

It is necessary to distinguish between what could be regarded as regular Holocaust teaching and extensive teaching. Regular teaching is characterised by a method that does not vary significantly from teaching of other subjects or themes.

It is debatable whether additional teaching aids or training would develop regular teaching. Teachers who participate in seminars on the Holocaust claim that they do so because they are already interested and committed to the subject.<sup>19</sup> Thus, additional education for teachers would have only a marginal effect on regular instruction, though it is vital to extensive teaching.

In extensive Holocaust teaching, educators apply methods and purposes that stretch far beyond, or lie completely outside, regular teaching. Extensive teaching is fairly widespread today. It involves incorporating external elements into teaching, for instance, by inviting eyewitnesses to speak, visiting Holocaust memorials, or showing films. It can also mean eschewing the normal schedule to concentrate on a theme, or engaging in a theme project that stretches over a long period.

Looking at factors that indicate activities relating to Holocaust teaching, the overall picture is unexpectedly positive. Studying visitor statistics from Auschwitz, publication of literature on the Holocaust, and the lending of films about the Holocaust to schools, we find that these activities increased dramatically from the late 1990s to 2001. The increase has levelled out now, but there is no downturn yet, except possibly in the publication of literature in 2004.

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<sup>17</sup> Royal Library LIBIRIS. Subject: Holocaust. Advanced search, "Literature for children and young adults".

<sup>18</sup> Löwengart, *Bilden av antisemitism och Förintelsen i svenska läromedel i historia*, pp 43-45.

<sup>19</sup> KAN Kommunikationsanalys AB, *Levande historia som kommunikationsprocess* (Living History as a Communication Process) p 23

Hence, we can draw the conclusion that it is extremely unusual, or practically unimaginable, that a student should finish Swedish school without having been taught about the Holocaust. Moreover, it is fairly commonplace for students to be taught extensively about the Holocaust.

There are obstacles, however, to the development of Holocaust education and a continued high teaching standard. These include:

- **Reduced financial resources**

Swedish public schools are under the auspices of the local authority. As local finances have continued to deteriorate over the current period, there is less funding for activities outside regular teaching. Moreover, the cost of study tours to Poland has gone up, due to inflation in Poland.

In order to come to terms with this problem, the extensive activities need to become more cost-effective so that they can compete with other expensive extra educational activities.

- **Fewer eyewitnesses for classroom visits**

Many schools have developed good relations with one or more local survivors of the Holocaust. These eyewitnesses have been visiting schools for many years, both within the framework of regular teaching as well as in connection with Holocaust Remembrance Day and similar events. As the survivor generation diminishes, we will need to find new ways to replace their contributions. We need to begin preparing for that time now.

- **Less training for educators practising extensive teaching**

From 1998 to 2002, a number of teacher-training courses were introduced in didactics and history relating to the Holocaust. During this period, thousands of Swedish teachers attended additional long or short training sessions. The majority of these sessions have since been discontinued, partly because many teachers have already participated in them. In the future, however, it is essential that we maintain the continuity and availability of training for teachers.

It is not possible to ascertain how these factors relate to one another, or if there are additional factors or perhaps even more crucial factors.

## **Appendix**

### **Survey of university courses available in the academic year 2004- 2005**

The course prospectuses for this academic year largely reflect the those for the previous and following years. In theory, therefore, the list below represents a three-year academic period, with minor adjustments.<sup>20</sup>

#### **a) Courses solely or specifically about the Holocaust**

Here Uppsala University has the broadest and most in-depth range of undergraduate and post-graduate courses. Examples are: "Genocide and Massive Violence in the Modern World" (5

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<sup>20</sup> The Swedish academic year is divided into two terms, and full-time study normally merits 20 points per term.

points), “The Holocaust in European History and Historiography” (10 points), and “Ethnic Violence in the Balkans” (5 points). All courses are held by the Centre for Multiethnic Research at Uppsala University.

Gothenburg University offers a course titled “Sweden and the Holocaust” (10 points) every year, which focuses on the years 1933–1945 and Sweden’s relation to Nazi Holocaust policy.

#### **b) Courses incorporating a section on the Holocaust within a broader academic subject**

All universities which offer undergraduate History courses (20 points) include the Holocaust as a course topic.

In History:

Södertörn University College offers “Romanian History” (5 points).

Stockholm University offers “Racism—Historical Perspective” (4 points).

The Mid Sweden University offers “History, Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and Genocide” (5 points).

In Religious History:

Lund University offers “Ethics After the Holocaust” (5 points).

In History of Ideas:

Halmstad University College offers “The History of Racial Ideology” (5 points).

Södertörn University College offers “The History of Racial Ideology” (10 points) and “Racism and Xenophobia in Modern Europe” (10 points).

Karlstad University offers “The History of Racial Ideology” (10 points).

Uppsala University offers “The History of Racial Ideology” (5 points).

Umeå University offers “Ideas on Life—Biology and Biologism from an Ideological-Historical Perspective” (5 points) focusing on Nazi eugenics and other issues.

#### **c) Courses incorporating Holocaust-related subject didactics and theory in teacher training**

All teaching colleges include common courses on fundamental social values in theory and practice in their prospectuses. It is unclear, however, whether these courses use the Holocaust as a theoretic example or a didactic point of departure.

Växjö University offers “Civic Courage, Fundamental Values and Democracy” (20 points).

The Stockholm Institute of Education offers “Lessons from Auschwitz. On Humanism and Human Dignity” (10 points).

Kristianstad University offers “The Holocaust and Fundamental Social Values” (5 points).

Malmö University College offers “Mankind and Society—On Fundamental Values in the World” (10 points).

#### **d) Courses with a distinct didactic or subject-related section of a cross-disciplinary nature**

Gothenburg University, through Museion (department for cross-disciplinary development), offers “Racism, Science and Culture” (10 points), in which the Holocaust is used prominently as an example. Exclusively subject theory.

Luleå University of Technology offers “Racism and Transculturalism” (5 points), using the Holocaust as one of several background examples.

Växjö University offers a course with a literature and history perspective titled “Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and Sweden” (5 points), which includes both subject theory and subject didactics (cancelled).

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